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ABSTRACT

A research study examined the extent and impact of one-year enrollments by 12th graders in 2-year secondary vocational programs in New Hampshire. Enrollment data from 1981-1982 and 1982-1983 school years from six rural Regional Centers were used for the sample. A review of current literature found that no other state has ever researched the prevalence of 12th graders in first-year vocational programming. Personal interviews with vocational directors, principals, guidance personnel, and teachers and a mail survey of 12th graders provided the necessary data. A sampling of responses revealed that vocational education is considered an elective at all selected sites. Class enrollment has a greater influence over composition than the concept of 2-year sequential enrollment. Guidance personnel and several vocational directors did encourage 12th graders to enroll for career exploration. Most vocational directors, principals, guidance personnel, and students believed that necessary competencies for entry-level employment could be taught and learned in the first year. (Instruments are appended.) (YLB)

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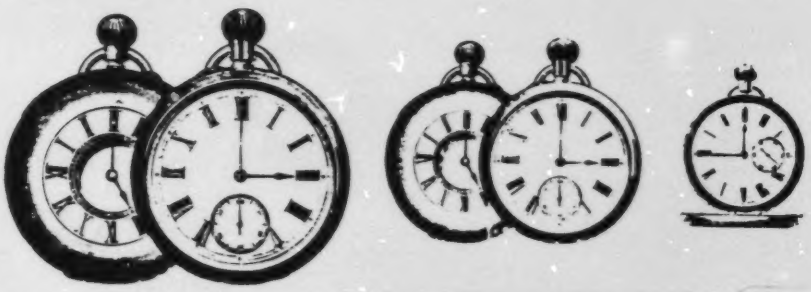
A STUDY ON

one year enrollments in selected vocational centers in new hampshire



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A STUDY ON ONE YEAR ENROLLMENTS

IN SELECTED VOCATIONAL CENTERS IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

Contract #10443

June 30, 1983

Prepared for The Department of Education
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FOREWARD

This document is the report of a study carried out during the period from April 7, 1983 through June 30, 1983. The study was carried out by Dr. Robert Lister and Stephen Lichtenstein, through a service contract with the Division of Vocational-Technical Education, New Hampshire State Department of Education. As stated in the contract, the purpose of the study was to conduct research, "investigating one-year vocational education program enrollments at the secondary level." Primary attention was paid to twelfth graders enrolled in vocational education programs for the first time.

This document details that research.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Extent and Impact of One-Year

Vocational Education Program Enrollments

The purpose of this research study was to examine the extent and impact of one-year enrollments in two-year secondary vocational programs in New Hampshire. Six rural Regional Centers were selected by the New Hampshire Research Coordinating Unit for the investigation. Enrollment data from 1981-1982 and 1982-1983 school years were used for the sample.

The review of current literature was fruitless in providing educational practices on a national scope. Apparently, no other state has ever researched the prevalence of twelfth graders in first year vocational programming. A survey to state RCU's did provide a sampling of state priorities and reporting but was not adequate enough in addressing the primary aims of this project.

Personal interviews with vocational directors, principals, guidance personnel, teachers and a mail survey of twelfth graders provided the necessary products.

A sampling of the responses from our interviewing revealed the following:

-Vocational education is considered an elective in all selected sites.

-Class enrollment has a greater influence over class composition than the concept of two-year sequential enrollment.

-Guidance personnel and several vocational directors did encourage twelfth graders to enroll for career exploration.

-Most vocational directors, principals, guidance personnel and students did believe that necessary competencies for entry level employment could be taught and learned in the first year.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

1. Background Information

> Secondary school curricula have been homogenized, diluted, and diffused to the point that they no longer have a central purpose. In effect, we have a cafeteria-style curriculum in which the appetizers and desserts can easily be mistaken for the main courses. Students have migrated from vocational and college preparatory programs to "general track" courses in large numbers. The proportion of students taking a general program of study has increased from 12% in 1964 to 42% in 1979. (A Nation at Risk, 1983)

The vocational education literature is extremely limited with regard to the multi-faceted effects of one-year enrollments. (See Appendix A) In the case of recent New Hampshire initiated studies, one-year enrollments are comprised of two population groups: (1) the student who has successfully completed their junior year in a vocational program but chooses not to re-enroll for the second year (sometimes referred to as a summer program leaver), and (2) the twelfth grader enrolling in vocational education for the first time. Both groups are considered early "program leavers." However, only the second group is the population of this study.

In the last two years, New Hampshire's Research Coordinating Unit (RCU) has initiated several studies investigating attrition in secondary vocational programs (Profile Development Associates, 1982, RCU Report 1983-8, Applied Research Associates, 1983). Although this group has not been adequately researched on a national level, state-wide studies have carefully and thoroughly reported the various effects of this

population. Nationally and state-wide the group that has never been examined for effects and impact are the twelfth graders enrolling in vocational programs for the first time, who obviously cannot complete the sequence of courses.

It should be emphasized that this study is an initial investigation into what the RCU and others consider a problem. It is not possible to provide conclusive data regarding the specific population in an initial research project.

II. Overview of Literature

Material collected through the survey of State RCU's provided the only basis for comparing and contrasting state figures and priorities. In no instance was the theme of one year enrollments of twelfth graders addressed in the thirty states providing feedback on an initial survey. Only one study initiated by the Colorado Unit of the State Board of Community Colleges and Occupational Education entitled Survey of Non-Completers and No-Shows of Vocational Programs in Colorado, dated July, 1980, attempted to identify the economic implications:

> ...students not completing at least 50 percent of their program are less likely to obtain permanent related employment. The estimated aggregate cost for the state and school to provide partial training to non-completers (@ $1,500 each) was approximately $6,000,000.

No other information on how they derived this figure was provided.

On the topic of unemployment the Follow-up of Ohio's Secondary, Postsecondary and Long-term Adult Vocational Program Completers for School Year 1980-1981 reflects the economic benefits derived from completing a vocational job training program as 86.5 percent of the secondary program completers available for work obtained jobs with only 13.5 percent being unemployed. The 13.5 percent unemployed vocational youth compares favorably to an Ohio Bureau of Employment Services report that 22.2 percent of general unemployment was attributed to age bracket 21 and under for the reporting period. The 22.2 percent was almost double the 13.5 percent reported for the program completers. No data on program leavers was reported in this study or any other requested literature.

In the Spring of 1982, 4148, completer and leavers were surveyed by New Hampshire's RCU as to current employment. With a response rate

of 48 percent the RCU Research Report 1982-14 identified

> Approximately 15 percent of the vocational program completers...were currently unemployed and seeking employment. The unemployment rate for program leavers was almost double that of the program completers--28 percent.
>
> The national unemployment rate for teenagers (16-19) in March 1983 when the survey was initiated completers and leavers was 23.5 percent. This national unemployment rate is over 50 percent higher than the unemployment rate of the completers of vocational education programs. The unemployment rate of the leavers of vocational programs (28 percent) is approximately 30 percent higher than the national unemployment rate for the same age group.

In a separate New Hampshire RCU Research Report entitled "Average Hourly Wages of Secondary Vocational Program Participants 1980-1983" (1983-10) vocational program completers increased their hourly wages at a much greater rate than that of vocational program leavers (non-completers). Table 1 indicates four years of comparison.

TABLE 1 (RCU REPORT 1983-10)

Average Hourly Wage of Secondary Vocational Program Completes and Leavers

	Completers		Leavers	
School Year	Hourly Wage	Annual % of change	Hourly Wage	Annual % of change
1978-79	$3.81	Base	$3.74	Base
1979-80	$4.06	6.6%	$3.94	5.3%
1980-81	$4.43	9.1%	$4.00	1.5%
1981-82	$4.24	-4.3%	$4.06	1.5%

III. Controversy Over Program Effectiveness and Data Collection

Vocational education programs are mandated to provide students with skills that will enable them to enter a related job upon completion of their training. Thus, an important aspect of determining vocational education outcomes is ascertaining student's career paths following training. Data on the education and labor force participation of persons who have received training provide information useful in identifying and assessing the benefits of vocational education.

During recent reauthorization hearings before the House of Representatives, Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary and Vocational Education, Committee on Education and Labor, Rolf M. Wulfsberg, Assistant Administrator for Research and Analysis, National Center for Education Statistics, stated

> Vocational Education is a broad and complex enterprise designed to serve the needs of a diverse clientele. In many cases, the program objectives of vocational students does not include completion of the program, for example, a student may have most of the basic skills required for a given occupation, but need to obtain a limited amount of additional training. Such a student is likely to discontinue his/her training as soon as he/she has obtained the needed skills. If one defines success of a program to be the fulfillment of student's training objective, then the student just described may be counted as a success of the program as may the program completer...Other students may enroll in a vocational program on a strictly exploratory basis...again, it seems inappropriate to include such students in the calculation of an achievement measure.

According to correspondence with Judith S. Thompson, Associate Consultant, Bureau of Vocational Program Planning and Development for the State of Connecticut's Division of Vocational and Adult Education, no current data on program leavers is being collected. The requirement to collect follow-up data on program leavers has been suspended by the National Center for Education Statistics (letter of June 2, 1983).

IV. National and State Figures on Enrollment

During the same round of testimony mentioned previously on Vocational Education Reauthorization, national aggregate figures on the completion status of eleventh and twelfth grade vocational education students revealed that during the 1978-1979 academic year 49.2% completed their program, 39.8% remained in their program, 6.2% left after less than half the academic year and 4.8% left after more than half the academic year (Reauthorization, 1980). According to the New Hampshire RCU for the 1980-1981 school year, approximately 44 percent of those enrolled completed their vocational program in 1981. Eighteen percent left their program without completing. The remaining 38 percent enrolled were expected to continue their respective vocational program in the following year (NH RCU 1982-9). The next academic year showed a higher incidence of program leavers with twenty-eight percent discontinuing their program without completing (NH RCU 1982-13). To further compound the situation, of the 38 percent that were enrolled in vocational programs in 1981-1982 school year and were expected to continue in their respective programs the following September for the 1982-83 school year, approximately 27 percent left their program (did not re-enroll). This is the group commonly referred to as summer dropouts or summer program leavers.

At the core of this research study is the first reporting on the prevalence of twelfth graders as new enrollees in vocational education programs (NH RCU 1982-25). Using enrollment figures from September, 1982, new enrollees in Grades 9-12 make up a majority of the current vocational enrollment: 7,322 students or 67 percent of the total enrollment (see Table II).

TABLE II (RCU REPORT 1982-25)

1982-1983 Vocational Program Enrollments by

Continuing/New Enrollment Status

Status	Number	Percent
Continuing enrollment	3,687	33.4
New enrollment	7,322	66.6
Total	11,009	100.00

According to the same report, approximately 27 percent of the new enrollees in vocational education programs are 12th grade students. The very high percentages of twelfth graders as new enrollees in office occupations, diversified occupations, and special training programs are expected. The length of enrollment in these courses are not entirely sequential in nature. By removing the enrollment data for these areas the adjusted percent of new enrollees being twelfth graders, on a statewide basis is 21:1. (No other states surveyed were able to document the prevalence of twelfth grade enrollment).

Fifty-nine secondary institutions offering vocational education programs in New Hampshire indicated new enrollees for the 1982-1983 school year. The number and percent of twelfth graders reported by these secondary institutions vary from a low of 2% to a high of 47%. Table III indicates the prevalence of twelfth graders in the six centers selected for this study.

TABLE III (RCU REPORT 1982-25)

NEW TWELFTH GRADE VOCATIONAL PROGRAM ENROLLMENT

AT THE SIX SELECTED SITES*

School	New Enrollment	Number of 12th graders	Percent of 12th graders
Kingswood Regional	49	1	2.0
Somersworth High	177	20	11.3
Exeter Area	252	29	11.5
Berlin High	146	25	17.1
Littleton High	51	15	29.4
Kennett High	84	34	40.5

*Does not include students in the office occupations, diversified occupations or STEP areas.

With an absence of available evidence from other states it is impossible to compare and contrast New Hampshire's figures on prevalence of twelfth graders. Currently, the Vocational Education Data System (VEDS) does not require such detailed reporting on the characteristics of new enrollments in vocational education programs. It is highly unlikely that this type of reporting will be mandated when most of the controversy centers around the basic issue of vocational program effectiveness. Arguing this point, Wulfsberg, in his testimony in support of vocational education reauthorization, singled out data collection and calculating effectiveness:

> The completion rate, as traditionally reported in vocational education is an annual rate of output. It does not provide information as to the proportion of a given group of enrollees which will ultimately complete the program. The completion rate as currently defined should not be used to measure program effectiveness, but should only be used in an occupational supply context....Yet another reason for not using the completion rate as a performance measure is that a program completion is not necessarily a positive outcome to vocational education.

> Nor is the program leaver necessarily a failure to the program. Certainly a student who leaves a program prior to completion in order to take employment in a job related to his/her training is a more favorable outcome than the program completer who cannot find a job.

V. Future Outlook and Summary

Nationally, the dilemma over how to measure program effectiveness tends to dominate the issues over vocational education reauthorization. Details over delivery systems and local control do not attract the national limelight. Dr. Gene Bottoms, Executive Director of American Vocational Association, pronounced an understatement when he said: "Vocational Education is a highly decentralized system." The delivery of vocational education differs light-years from one state to another. Funding priorities, length of program enrollment, data collection and conflicts with general academic education are only a few of the many problems that plague this complex system.

On a local basis, it is universally accepted that "high school course offerings naturally limit the availability of vocational education to secondary level students " (Reauthorization, 1980). With the current national trend towards upgrading the math and science requirements, vocational education will need to compete even harder to recruit and retain students for sequential courses that may conflict with graduation requirements or the requirements of colleges and universities.

The surveys to state RCU's overwhelmingly indicated that vocational education is still delivered in two or more year sequences. The basic conflict surrounding scheduling and changes in career goals hampers the major intent of providing the necessary entry-level competencies to its enrollees.

In the absence of an organized state-wide Pre-vocational and Career Exploration Program for grades 7-10, the incidence of students dabbling in one-year courses will persist and may actually increase. (Unless funding practices are adjusted to reflect completion data). This is fueled by the guidance and vocational directors viewpoint that "one course beats no course" and the result is a high prevalance of twelfth graders. Connecticut's Division of Vocational and Adult Education proposes a compromise worth noting:

> Vocational Orientation Program (Grades 9-12)
>
> The need for a Vocational Orientation Program is twofold. First, in every school system there will always be a percentage of students who will want to continue to explore and develop generic skills (i.e., transferable skills) without making a long term commitment. Second, a large percentage of students entering in to a high school setting are not vocationally mature enough to make a career choice that entails a specific vocational instructional area for their three or four year high school experience. Therefore, the major purpose of a Vocational Orientation Program should be to prepare students with the ability to exercise career and educational opportunities during his/her high school experiences and/or upon graduation. The purposes of a Vocational Orientation Program would be to assist students (in grades nine through twelve) to:
>
> 1. formulate educational plans in line with employment possibilities and appraisal of personal potential,
> 2. move through a sequential learning process in an identified content area, and
> 3. develop the skills necessary to enter a vocational-technical program or continue their formal education.

All attempts at finding related literature through ERIC, Bibliographic Retrieval and Dissertation Abstracts were unsuccessful. Many of the current practices can be found in the section entitled "Findings and Results."

METHODOLOGY

The method for completion of this study and activities to be carried out:

GOAL I: Review the current literature and educational practice as to secondary vocational education program lengths (time) and other requirements.

1.1 One month from the date of agreement of the contract, a national literature search will be completed. An extensive review of the related research will be investigated through the ERIC System using these descriptors:

Vocational Education
Dropouts
Industrial Education/Trade Education
Student attrition
Early program leavers
One year enrollments
Secondary education
Economic impact
Cost effectiveness

1.2 As a result of an extensive national computer search, a detailed description of educational practices as to secondary vocational education program lengths and other program requirements will be compiled.

GOAL II: Determine the extent and impact (economic, programmatic and social) of one year enrollment in two year secondary vocational education programs in New Hampshire.

2.1 One month from date of agreement of the acceptance of this contract, personal interviews will be scheduled and conducted with vocational directors, vocational instructors, guidance personnel, principals and students. (Names of one year program completers will be secured

from the RCU).

2.2 Collaboration with the agency that was awarded the contract entitled Program Leavers Study. It is felt that the two agencies and research projects should consult with each other regarding source of the relevancy of the information and data to be collected.

2.3 Collaboration with agency of the concurrent study (Summer Attrition in New Hampshire Secondary Vocational Programs, 1982).

2.4 Meet with Research Coordinating Unit to decide on form of final report.

2.5 National Survey to Division of Vocational and Technical Instruction in each state to determine program length, program leavers, and economic, programmatic and social issues.

2.6 Analysis of data.

2.7 Preparation of final report for Research Coordinating Unit.

FINDINGS AND RESULTS

INTERVIEWS WITH VOCATIONAL DIRECTORS AND PRINCIPALS (n=10)

1. Do you view vocational programs as electives?

   10 yes

   0 no

2. Does your vocational center keep records on the cost of vocational education per student?

   "No, the Superintendent has it" (4 responses)

   "Yes!" (6 responses)

   "Yes, we have cost/student/course, for example our foods course cost $548/student, natural resources cost $175/student. I guess if you included everything (i.e., building cost and maintenance) it might come to $2800-$3000/student"

   "Yes, it's easily obtained by contacting Bill Porter. He keeps records on local expenditure. Divide that by total enrollment."

   "No!"

3. Does your school penalize a student in anyway for not continuing into a second year?

   10 No

   0 Yes

4. Are there any built-in incentives for not continuing?

   "No" (7 responses)

   "not locally, state has mandated for increase requirements in science and math. This has created a scheduling problem. Sometimes the seniors are not sure of their standing in college

prep courses. If they have all the requirements, they may sign up for vocational education as exploration"

"With our smorgasbord scheduling seniors are encouraged to dabble. If a student has a conflict then this eliminates vocational education. They are usually encouraged to take other choices by guidance personnel"

"No, juniors who get academically turned on and decide to take a rigorous course tend to drop their voc program. Other barriers include: scheduling problems, bus ride and quality of instruction"

5. Are you aware of any effect one year enrollments have on the local employment picture?

No (8 responses)

"One year enhances employment but two years is better"

"Employment is a poor criteria to evaluate vocational education. Training is not the overall purpose of vocational education. Employers should train. Good attitude towards work should be our focus"

"Minimal impact on employment"

"Two year student has the advantage"

6. Do you encourage students to take one year of a two year program?

Yes (3 responses)

No (7 responses)

"college bound student should get some vocational education"

"if senior, yes, one year is better than zero"

"we only ask for a one year committment"

7. Do you perceive vocational programs as a sequential program?

   Yes (8 responses)

   "Varies with program"

   "Sequence of skills, time is not a factor. The grouping has more to do with ability than grade level attainment"

8. How important is the sequence?

   "Very important! We separate juniors and seniors"

   "We stress two years"

   "Very!" (2 responses)

   "Depends on student interest and motivation. Some can do it in one year"

   "Career exploration should take place elsewhere"

   "Important to curriculum and employability"

9. Are schools more interested in one year enrollments than two year sequence?

   Yes (3 responses)

   No (6 responses)

   "Some guidance people like the one year approach. Everyones view is different."

   "Leadership doesn't buy the mission of skill orientation"

10. Are an appropriate number of competencies being taught the first year to make a student employable?

    Yes (7 responses)

    "Depends on student. A highly motivated student could pick up enough skills to have a salable product"

    "Don't know, attitude is heavy consideration"

    "Should be---but currently not the case"

11. Do school catalogs portray vocational programs as two year sequences?

No (1 response)

Yes (8 responses)

"If it doesn't---it should"

12. Is it more cost effective to offer the first year of a vocational program over the second?

Yes (3 responses)

"Can't generalize, it differs with skill area"

"Don't know, on the surface it appears so, but damage to equipment may negate that"

"Yes, according to numbers"

"No difference"

"First year is more expensive"

"Who knows!"

"Don't know, building trades cost more the junior year"

"Second year is more expensive"

13. What would happen to your vocational program if seniors were not allowed to enroll in only the first year of a two year program?

"Nothing" (3 responses)

"Cost would increase"

"I'm reluctant to put a senior in a first year program"

"Underused facility"

"Very little impact"

"It would not jeopardize course--some would hurt though"

14. Do you have any senior handicapped or disadvantaged students who are in their first year?

"Yes, only 1, she just returned to the district. Unfortunately, she dropped recently"

"A few economically disadvantaged for extenuating reasons"

"Don't know"

"We prefer to get them earlier"

"Probably yes, in our S.T.E.P. program"

"Not to my knowledge"

"Yes"

"Yes, transfer student in auto mechanics"

15. Do you believe that vocational education students who do not complete at least 50% of their program are less likely to obtain permanent related employment?

Yes (9 responses)

No (1 response)

16. Do you believe that vocational education completers have an earnings advantage over the non-completer or person who does not take vocational education and doesn't go on to college?

Yes (10 responses)

INTERVIEWS WITH GUIDANCE COUNSELORS (n=6)

1. Is vocational education an elective)

   Yes (6 responses) No (0 responses)

2. Do students who have IEP's have written provisions that would indicate that they are in a two year program?

   No (5 responses)

   "Yes--annual goals with two year emphasis"

3. Do you perceive the vocational programs to be one course or a two course series?

   Two courses = program (6 responses)

4. Do you sell vocational education courses as one course packages?

   Yes (3 responses)

   No (3 responses)

5. Have you counselled seniors to enroll in vocational program?

   "No, only special needs seniors"

   "Yes, in some instances"

   "Yes, graduation requirements may keep them out of vocational education in their junior year"

   "Yes, college prep students"

   "Yes, if they decide they want to try a vocational program to experiment or explore"

   "Only if they have their graduation requirements"

   "No!"

6. Do school catalogs inicate that vocational programs are a two year sequence?

   Yes (4 responses)

   No (2 responses)

7. What programmatic requirements keep students from enrolling in the second year?

   "Scheduling in high school" (2 responses)

   "If student is failing another course and needs to repeat---they lose the opportunity to take the elective"

   "Four factors: (1) graduation requirements
   (2) change in career goals
   (3) work conflicts
   (4) transportation hassles"

   "None" (2 responses)

8. What have you done with vocational teachers to encourage successful students to go on to the second year?

   "Vocational application is made out by sophomores with choices. Committee, made up of guidance and vocational people review and make final decision"

   "We encourage teachers to give "pep" talks on re-enrolling"

   "Personal counselling for special needs students"

   "We instituted a student withdrawal process that includes personal counselling"

   "Nothing"

   "Depends on teacher"

9. Of the students who go into vocational education, how many get their first choice?

"Most do, scheduling can be a pain"

"80%"

"90%"

"95%"

"99%"

"Most"

10. How successful are your vocational students in finding employment?

"Don't know"

"Fairly successful, youth have related outside employment which leads to full-time"

"70% do"

"60% including military"

"No personnel to conduct follow-up"

INTERVIEWS WITH VOCATIONAL TEACHERS WITH 12th GRADERS IN THEIR PROGRAM (n=6)

1. Do you consider your program as an elective?

   "Yes, but not all students get first choice" ("Students also perceive this as an elective")

   "Yes, and students think so too" (5 responses)

2. Do you "sell" your courses as part of a two year sequence or one year only?

   "Both ways"

   "Yes--two years" (3 responses)

   "Two or three years"

   "A person can complete in one year too"

3. What programmatic requirements keep students from enrolling in the second year?

   "Scheduling" (3 responses)

   "Attendance policy--20 days absent and you're out"

   "Requirements for graduation--conflicts with academics"

   "Disciplinary problems and scheduling"

4. Is it more cost effective to offer the first year vocational program over the second year?

   "First year more expensive"

   "Don't know" (4 responses)

   "Even"

5. Does your principal support your program?

   "Yes" (3 responses)

   "Benign neglect!"

   "No" (2 responses)

6. Why do you have seniors in a first year program?

   "Only opportunity they have due to scheduling hassles"

   "Needed one more elective to graduate"

   "You're told to take them to boost numbers"

   "Enrollment numbers" (2 responses)

   "They couldn't get it as a junior"

7. Who enrolls seniors in typically junior level courses?

   "Guidance" (3 responses)

   "Student elects"

   "Committee reviewing application"

   "I encourage them if it fits their career goals"

8. What is more important--class enrollment or two year sequence?

   Class enrollment (6 responses)

9. Generally, is this your student's first choice?

   "Junior year 6 out of 12 got their first choice. Senior year 10 out of 12 got their choice. Some students take Building Trades II before Building Trades I"

   "Yes" (4 responses)

STUDENT SURVEY RESPONSES

TABLE LV

N = 129

	Number	Percent
Returned	51	40
Not Returned	78	60

The initial student survey was distributed to a total of 129 students. Forty-one responses were returned. A second survey was sent to those who had not responded. Of those, ten more were received for a total of 51 or 40%. The percentages used in the following summary are based on a total number of 51 surveys that were returned.

1. Was your present vocational program your first choice?

	Number	Percent
Yes	39	76
No	10	24

The ten respondents who did not get their first choice stated what their choise was and what they were in:

automotive--automechanics

agriculture mechanics--forestry

drafting--woodshop

automotive--building trades

health occupations--childcare

autobody--woodshop

automotive--building trades

childcare--drafting

welding--automotive

woodshop--automechanics

2. Did you sign up for your present vocational program as an elective?

	Number	Percent
Yes	41	80
No	10	20

3. Who recommended this program to you?

	Number	Percent
Friends	19	37
Guidance counselor	7	14
Parents	0	0
Word of mouth	6	12
Self	14	27
Vocational teacher	3	7
Special Ed teacher	1	1

4. Do you believe you can be successful in this occupation with one year of a two year program?

	Number	Percent
Yes	28	55
No	23	45

5. What was your goal in taking this program?

"To become aware of the business world" (2 responses)

"To learn the basics of a car"

"To learn machine work" (2 responses)

"To learn certain systems"

"To learn auto mechanics"

"To learn about children"

"To learn to weld"

"To see if I would enjoy it as an occupation"

"Future employment"

"To learn about foods"

"To learn about food service to go to college"

"To learn welding for personal reasons"

"Hobby"

"To learn basics of small business"

"My father has a business and I wanted more skills"

"Getting a certificate"

"Learn the tricks of the trade"

"Learn to work in the woods"

"Learn more about business"

"To be a nurses aide"

"Had no goal"

"To gain knowledge of carpentry"

"To increase my awareness of animal science"

"Gain knowledge of repairing cars"

"Learn basic techniques of carpentry"

"Learn principles of auto mechanics"

"To become a teachers aide with pre-schoolers"

"To learn about commercial kitchen"

"Was interested in what the program offers"

"Would be a good trade to have (workshop)"

"To learn more about store management"

"For a good job"

6. Do you wish you could take the next year of the program?

	Number	Percent
Yes	37	73
No	14	27

7. What are your plans after graduation?

	Number	Percent
2 year college	9	18
4 year college	8	16
job	23	45
military service	3	6
no answer	7	14

8. Is the program challenging enough for you?

	Number	Percent
Not challenging	5	10
Challenging	35	69
Highly challenging	11	22

9. Did your teacher ever mention this year was the first year of a two year program?

	Number	Percent
Yes	36	71
No	15	29

10. Did anyone try to talk you out of enrolling in your present vocational program?

	Number	Percent
Yes	9	18
Guidance	(5)	
Accounting teacher	(1)	
Can't say	(1)	
Parents	(1)	
Lots of people	(1)	
No	42	82

11. Why did you wait until your senior year to take your present vocational program?

"Wasn't aware of the class"

"Class was full before" (5 responses)

"Did not need it before for graduation"

"Father told me to take it"

"Had the course both years"

"Personal reasons"

"Only time I could fit it into my schedule"

"Took child care in 11 & 12 grades"

"I didn't make the class roll"

"No room in class previously"

"I took 3 years of the program because I have a learning disability"

"Didn't know about the class"

"I started in my sophmore year"

"I am only a junior"

"Don't know"

"Nothing else is available for me"

"Why not"

"It seemed interesting"

"School didn't have the course before"

"I had no choice"

"This is my first year in a vocational center"

"Last year, I was not interested"

"Needed another elective for graduation"

"Wanted to see what DE was about"

"Wasn't sure what the course is about"

"Was the 1st year of the program"

"I dropped out of auto because I didn't like the teacher"

"Moved here from Mass. in my senior year"

"I am a junior"

"Business teacher made me take another course"

"Was not offered in my junior year"

"Took it in my sophmore year"

12. Have you ever discussed occupations you could enter after taking only one year of a two-year program?

	Number	Percent
Yes	17	33
No	34	67

13. What do you think is the purpose of vocational education?

"Provide hands on experience"

"Increase work skills"

"To better prepare people for the job market"

"To enrich, reinforce self-discipline and to help succeed in a new field"

"To give you skills"

"To learn a trade"

"To learn an occupation"

"To teach a trade"

"Provide training in vocational training"

"Job related experience"

"To make better leaders"

"To train kids in an occupational area" (2 responses)

"To further kids education"

"Help in future as a tradesman" (2 responses)

"So you can learn by doing" (2 responses)

"To teach how to work" (2 responses)

"To teach students who won't go to college a trade" (2 responses)

"To get training in high school to be used later"

"To train to be functional"

"To learn"

"To give students an idea of occupations that they may be interested in"

"To teach and learn business and its purpose"

"To give students who are not going to college after high school a skill"

"Provide hands on experience"

"To help people get their foot in the door"

NON-COMPLETERS IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION SURVEY OF STATES

TABLE V

N = 50

	Number	Percent
Returned	30	60%
Not returned	20	40%

The percentages used in the following summary are based on the number of surveys returned.

1. Has your state ever conducted a study into the nature and extent of non-completers in secondary vocational education?

	Number	Percent
Yes	10	33
No	14	47
Currently under consideration	3	10
No answer	3	10

2. If yes to Question #1, would you please share this information?
   1. Connecticut did a survey of program leavers prior to 1980-81.
   2. Nebraska sampled 40% of 1979-80 leavers, but noted they had poor results.
   3. Kentucky stated that they had conducted a recent study on program leavers.

4. West Virginia does an annual study of program leavers.
5. Oklahoma provided a curriculum that alluded to program leavers.
6. Illinois collected program leavers' data last year.
7. New York stated that they kept accurate records related to non-completers.

3. Do you have any current information on the economic implications of vocational non-completers?

	Number	Percent
Yes	1	3
No	20	67
No answer	9	30

4. Do you have any current information on the programmatic implications of vocational non-completers?

	Number	Percent
Yes	1	3
No	20	67
No answer	9	30

5. Do you have any current information on the social implications of vocational non-completers?

	Number	Percent
Yes	0	0
No	22	73
No answer	8	27

6. Do you know of any retention programs or activities in local school districts designed to retain students for their full vocational education experience?

	Number	Percent
Yes	4	13
No	14	47
No answer	12	40

Written responses:

1. Alternative programs in Omaha and Lincoln, Nebraska.
2. Ohio has retention program.
3. Programs available in Kentucky.
4. Programs in Oakes, North Dakota.
5. South Dakota has programs with 25% success rate.
6. New York occupational education agencies.

(Information was requested but not provided)

7. In (name of state) is funding tied to the percentage of vocational program completers versus one-year enrollment?

	Number	Percent
Yes	0	0
No	24	80
No answer	6	20

8. In _____, what are the requirements and recommended length of secondary vocational programs?

	Number	Percent
Responses	22	73
Non-responses	8	27
1081 hours		1
semester courses		1
two year programs (11 & 12 grade)		13
1-4 years		2

length varies with type of program	2
3 years in length	2
same as academic	1

9. Is a competency based curriculum used as a basis for completion in _____?

	Number	Percent
Yes	11	37
No	14	47
No Answer	5	17

10. Are you currently investigating related issues to the one discussed above? If yes, please indicate the topic of the study.

	Number	Percent
Yes	6	20
No	17	57
No answer	7	23

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is apparent that all parties in the interviewing process understood the mission of vocational education. Unfortunately the need to fill course enrollment created the one year enrollment problem. An intriguing response by a majority of vocational directors and teachers indicated that entry-level skills can be taught in one year. Such a delivery system should be explored since this problem will not disappear and in many cases will increase.

The original investigation was directed at the programmatic, social and economic effects of one year enrollments. State surveys indicated a lack of such information and therefore this type of evidence has no influence on public policy and change.

It is impossible to put a dollar figure on the effects of one year enrollment in New Hampshire. In no instance did this study find that seniors were displacing juniors who have a sincere interest in the sequence of courses. The New Hampshire RCU has ample evidence through their follow-up research to document the economic implication of one year enrollments after graduation.

The following recommendations are offered for future direction and research.

Recommendations

1. Investigate the possibility of funding programs based on program completion instead of program enrollment.
2. A task force should be convened to enhance articulation between secondary and post-secondary vocational programs. (One question related to this: is a student still a program leaver if they go on to a related post-secondary program?)
3. Vocational Centers should develop individual contracts stating student goals in taking vocational education (i.e., one year or two year enrollments).
4. Special programs targeting guidance personnel should be initiated to familiarize them with the role, function and purpose of vocational education.
5. Assurances must be made that twelfth graders only enroll in the first year of a two-year program if the purpose of such enrollments is career exploration.
6. Counselors and students should have a clear understanding of what job entry skills may be gained during the first-year enrollment through the use of existing performance profiles and task analysis.

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Report 1982-14 1981-82 School Year Vocational Education Program Leavers: Sending School Students Compared with Receiving School Students

Report 1982-24 Unemployment Rates of Vocational Education Program Completers and Leavers

Report 1982-25 The Prevalence of Twelfth Graders as New Enrollees in Vocational Education Programs

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APPENDIX A

An extensive national review of related research conducted through the ERIC system and Comprehensive Dissertation Abstracts (CDA) using the following descriptors produced a limited number of resources:

Vocational Education or
Vocational Schools or
Vocational Training Centers or
Vocational High Schools or
Industrial Education/Trade Education and
Program length and
Program leavers or non-completers or dropouts and
Costs or cost effectiveness or program costs and
Social implications and
Program implications

Citations generated using ERIC and Comprehensive Dissertation Abstracts were extensive in the area of vocational education and cost effectiveness. The outcome when cross referenced with non-completers (or program leavers or dropouts) resulted in only sparce entries dealing primarily with evaluating programs for placing youth in jobs and international financing of education. In all instances, the computerized search revealed an absence of studies in one-year enrollments.

Other traditional sources of information such as the National Center for Vocational Education at Ohio State University and the Vocational Education Data System did not have readily accessible figures or information on this topic.

APPENDIX B

Educational Training Associates
Consulting in the field of Vocational/Special Education
54 HILLCREST DRIVE
PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03801
603/431-6577

April 10, 1983

(SAMPLE LETTER)

Dear

The New Hampshire State Department of Education's Research Coordinating Unit (RCU) is currently researching the effect of non-completers in secondary vocational education. Educational Training Associates (ETA) of Portsmouth, New Hampshire has been awarded a contract to investigate this topic.

Besides conducting a nationwide survey of all RCU's, ETA will be visiting selected vocational centers in New Hampshire to survey vocational directors, principals, guidance personnel, and non-completers of vocational programs. This research will be valuable in the RCU planning process.

Would you please help us in this endeavor by cooperating and filling out the enclosed brief survey instrument. Please feel free to include any related information that you may have available in your state concerning non-completers in secondary vocational education. This survey should be returned to:

Dr. Robert J. Lister
Educational Training Associates
54 Hillcrest Drive
Portsmouth, New Hampshire 03801

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Dr. Robert J. Lister

RJL/cal

(SAMPLE SURVEY)

Non-Completers in Vocational Education Survey

1. Has your state ever conducted a study into the nature and extent of non-completers in secondary vocational education?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Currently under consideration

2. If yes to Question #1, would you please share this information?

3. Do you have any current information on the economic implications of vocational non-completers?

4. Do you have any current information on the programmatic implications of vocational non-completers?

5. Do you have any current information on the social implications of vocational non-completers?

6. Do you know of any retention programs or activities in local school districts designed to retain students for their full vocational education experience?

7. In _____, is funding tied to the percentage of vocational program completers versus one-year enrollment?

8. In _____, what are the requirements and recommended length of secondary vocational programs?

9. Is a competency based curriculum used as a basis for completion in _____?

10. Are you currently investigating related issues to the one discussed above? If yes, please indicate the topic of the study.

Please return to: Dr. Robert Lister
ETA
54 Hillcrest Drive
Portsmouth, New Hampshire 03801

before May 25, 1983

(SAMPLE SURVEY)

Questions for Vocational Directors and Principals

1. Do you view vocational programs as electives?
2. Does your vocational center keep records on the cost of vocational education (per student)?
3. Does your school penalize a student in any way for not continuing into a second year?
4. Are there built-in incentives for not continuing?
5. Are you aware of any effect one year enrollments have on the employment
6. Do you encourage students to take one year of a two year program?
7. Do you perceive vocational programs as a sequential program?
8. How important is the sequence?
9. Are schools more interested in one year enrollments than two year sequences?
10. Are an appropriate number of competencies being taught the first year to make a student employable?
11. Do school catalogs portray vocational programs as two year sequences?
12. Is it more cost effective to offer the first year of a vocational program over the second year?
13. What would happen to your vocational program if seniors were not allowed to enroll in only the first year of a 2 year program?
14. Do you have any senior handicapped or disadvantaged students who are in their first year?
    - Why not sooner?
15. Do you believe that vocational education students who do not complete at least 50% of their program are less likely to obtain permanent related employment?
16. Do you believe that vocational education completers have an earnings advantage over the non-completer or person who does not take vocational education & doesn't go on to college?

(SAMPLE SURVEY)

Questions for guidance counselors

1. Is Vocational Education an elective?
2. Do students who have IEP's have written provisions that would indicate that they are in a two year program?
3. Do you perceive the vocational programs to be one course or a two course series?
4. Do you sell vocational education courses as one course package?
5. Have you counselled seniors to enroll in vocational programs?
6. Do school catalofs indicate that vocational programs are a two year sequence?
7. What programmatic requirements keep students from enrolling in the 2nd year?
8. What have you done with vocational teachers to encourage successful students to go on to the second year?
9. Of the students who go into vocational education, how many get their first choice?
10. How successful are your vocational students in finding employment?
11. What percentage of the students get their 1st choice?

(SAMPLE SURVEY)

Questions for Vocational teachers with 12th graders in their program for the 1st time:

1. Do you consider your program as an elective?

   - Do your students view it as an elective?

2. Do you "sell" your courses as part of a 2 year sequence or one year only?

3. What programmatic requirements keep students from enrolling in the 2nd year?

4. Is it more cost effective to offer first year vocational programs over the 2nd year?

5. Does your principal support your program?

6. Why do you have seniors in a first year program?

7. Who enrolls seniors in typically junior level courses?

8. What is more important - class enrollment or 2 year sequences?

9. Generally, is this your student's 1st choice?

(SAMPLE SURVEY)

Questions for Students: 12th graders

1. Is this course an elective?
2. Who recommended this vocational course?
3. Do you believe you can be successful in this occupation with only one course?
4. What is your goal in taking this course?
5. Do you wish you could take the next year of the course?
6. Are you planning to go to college (2 yr., 4 yr.) or enter the world of work?
7. What do you think of having Juniors in here with you?
8. Is the course challenging enough for you?
9. Did your teacher ever mention this course led to another?
10. Did anyone try to talk you out of enrolling?
11. Why did you wait until your senior year?
12. Have you ever spoken to your Vocational Director?
13. Have you ever discussed occupations you could enter after this course?
14. What do you perceive as the purpose of vocational education?
15. Was this your 1st choice?

Educational
Training
Associates
Consulting in the field of Vocational/Special Education
54 HILLCREST DRIVE
PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03801
603/431-6577

(SAMPLE SURVEY)

JUNE 10, 1983

CHRISTOPHE DUNKERLY
21 ELLIOT ST
EXETER, NH 03833

DEAR CHRISTOPHE:

OUR COMPANY HAS JUST RECEIVED A GRANT TO STUDY THE BENEFITS AND SHORTCOMINGS IN TAKING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION COURSES FOR ONE YEAR. ACCORDING TO OUR RECORDS YOU HAVE JUST TAKEN AUTO MECHANICS.

CHRISTOPHE, IT WOULD HELP OUR STUDY TREMENDOUSLY IF YOU WOULD TAKE A FEW MINUTES AND ANSWER THE ATTACHED QUESTIONS. THE RESULTS WILL BE CONFIDENTIAL AND YOUR NAME WILL NOT BE USED IN ANY WAY IN THE FINAL REPORT.

A SELF-ADDRESSED STAMPED ENVELOP HAS BEEN PROVIDED TO SPEED-UP THE PROCESS AND NOT CAUSE YOU ANY INCONVENIENCE. PLEASE RETURN THE QUESTIONNAIRE BY JUNE 24TH.

THANK YOU IN ADVANCE FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

SINCERELY,

Robert Lister

DR. ROBERT LISTER
PRESIDENT

ENCLOSURES

(SAMPLE SURVEY)

EDUCATIONAL TRAINING ASSOCIATES

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Was Auto Mechanics your first choice? (please check)

   |__| yes |__| no (If no, what was your first choice? _____
   _____)

2. Did you sign up for Auto Mechanics as an elective?

   |__| yes |__| no

3. Who recommended this program to you? (check one)

   |__| friends
   |__| guidance counselor
   |__| parents
   |__| word of mouth
   |__| vocational director
   |__| parents
   |__| other (please specify)
   _____

4. Do you believe you can be successful in this occupation with only one year of a two-year program?

   |__| yes |__| no

5. What was your goal in taking this program?

6. Do you wish you could take the next year of the program?

   |__| yes |__| no

7. What are your plans after graduation?

   |__| 2 year college (specify name) _____
   I plan to major in: _____

   |__| 4 year college (specify name) _____
   I plan to major in _____

   |__| job (specify name) _____

   |__| military service _____

   |__| other (specify) _____

8. Is the program challenging enough for you?

   |__| not challenging

   |__| challenging

   |__| highly challenging

9. Did your teacher ever mention this year was the first year of a two-year program?

   |__| yes |__| no

10. Did anyone try to talk you out of enrolling in Auto Mechanics ?

    |__| yes (who? _____)

    |__| no

11. Why did you wait until your senior year to take Auto Mechanics ?

12. Have you ever discussed occupations you could enter after taking only one year of a two-year program?

13. What do you think is the purpose of vocational education?